

Board of Health
Borough of Rocky Hill
MINUTES of meeting held on Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Attendance: Dr. Betsy Haines, Presiding; S. Fisher; M. Germain; B. Poelstra; M. Querec.

South Brunswick Health Department Staff: Mr. Steve Papenberg, Health Officer

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m. by President, B. Haines.

Review of Minutes: The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 were reviewed. Motion to accept as written was made by P. Querec, seconded by B. Poelstra. The motion was unanimously accepted.

Report of Health Officer:

- **Influenza Activity Level Report** distributed to Board members. President Haines raised a question about the Borough's Emergency Management Plan, especially as it relates to planning for a possible influenza pandemic. Mr. Papenberg indicated that Mr. Alan Querec, the Borough's Emergency Management Coordinator, is working on the 2008 revisions to the Health Annex of the Plan. When it is completed, he will send it to Mr. Papenberg for his review and that of the Board. Mr. Papenberg noted that **Flu Pandemic Planning** will be a separate annex; it is not incorporated into the Health Annex. He also noted that Emergency Management Plans are written to be generic; that the real substance is found in the appendices (annexes) which outline in detail, the response to each potential threat or situation.
- **Local Health Evaluation Report (LHER):** is due in April. It will be completed by Mr. Papenberg in collaboration with the Board and will be completed and submitted online. Mr. Papenberg asked for permission to include the names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses all the Board members in the LHER. Each member of the Board will specify what personal contact information may be included in the LHER by Mr. Papenberg.
- **Consolidation of Health Departments:** There has been no action to implement consolidation as of yet.

Report re: Municipal Alliance – presented by Dr. Beverly Poelstra and Mr. Steve Papenberg: Mr. Papenberg obtained a copy of the grant. 2008 grant funding is \$18,000. The municipalities in the Alliance must raise \$4500 (25% of \$18,000.) in order to obtain the grant funding for 2008. Dr. Poelstra described the purpose/goals of the Municipal Alliance as being focused primarily on the prevention of substance abuse among students in the local school system. He noted that the Alliance also undertakes initiatives in other areas that may affect students' psychosocial development such as anti-bullying programs; programs to build self esteem in girls... He described some of the successful programs developed from previous funding as well as some currently under development:

- **Elks/Alliance:** trained 5-6 students as peer counselors;
- **HiTops:** high school level wellness program which educates students about healthy eating; sex education...;
- **The Search Institute:** conducts needs surveys to determine at-risk populations and to identify potential assets within the communities for addressing the identified needs;

- **Girls On The Run:** girls are coached in techniques to become successful runners. The program is designed to build self-esteem. Three sessions are scheduled for Spring 2008.
- **Hopewell Valley's "Night Off":** Thursday nights in February. Teachers are asked to not assign homework; coaches are asked to not schedule game; organizations are asked to not schedule meetings... The goal is to provide a time for family sharing. Mr. Prewitt hopes to have this initiative launched by February of 2009.
- **4 th of July Fireworks Celebration:** it is held at the high school every year. The Municipal Alliance wants to have a booth at this year's event to promote community support for Alliance programs.

The Municipal Alliance is considering changing its name to the Montgomery-Rocky Hill Strategic Alliance.

New Business: President Haines attended the Open House held by the Rocky Hill Cooperative Nursery School. She noted that the sandbox in which the children play has no cover. There was unanimous agreement among Board members that the School should be advised to obtain a cover for the sandbox as soon as possible to prevent parasitic infections among the children.

Board of Health Planning for 2008:

- **Communication:** recommendation made to increase the Board's use of the Montgomery News to publicize important public health issues such as accident prevention; emergency preparedness (especially steps to be taken in the event of an influenza pandemic); prevention of rabies... Dr. Poelstra informed the Board that the Rocky Hill Newsletter would be coming out in several weeks and would contain information about upcoming events such as the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. She suggested that an educational piece could be developed for attachment to the newsletter. Dr. Poelstra volunteered to work with the Rocky Hill Community Group to insure inclusion of the Board's educational material. The Board discussed options for an educational attachment to the newsletter. The final consensus was that the attachment would focus on preventing the spread of disease and would be two-sided – (A): Cover Your Cough, and (B): Wash Your Hands – Be a Germ Buster. If space allows, additional information about prevention of rabies and MRSA; the need to cover sandboxes and dog and cat licensing will be included.

There was general discussion about the need to develop additional means to communicate with the residents of Rocky Hill, as well as the need to develop mechanisms to allow the Board to evaluate the effectiveness of such communication.

- ❖ **Board of Health Website:** Dr. Fisher gave a brief overview of a service, currently being used by Mayor Zimmerman in his firm, for hosting websites – **Netfirms** (www.netfirms.com). They offer three different plans:
 - \$4.95/month: recommended for use by individuals;
 - \$9.95/month: would probably meet the Board's needs. It includes free software to design the website. The user can have multiwebsite hosting.

It includes up to two domain names and allows for individual e-mail accounts. The Borough website could link to this service.

Dr. Poelstra moved to approve the expenditure of \$120 of the Board's annual budget for the purpose of contracting with Netfirms.com for the development of a Board of Health website. The motion was seconded by M. Querec. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

President Haines will work with the Borough Clerk to initiate the process for payment of the annual fee for service to Netfirms. Dr. Fisher and Dr. Haines will collaborate on developing a proposal for the layout and content of the website and will present this to the Board at the next meeting.

- **Accident Prevention – sidewalk lighting:** Dr. Germain had noted in a previous meeting that some Borough sidewalks that are used by runners in the evening and night, especially those in areas up by Route 206, are very poorly lighted. The poor lighting, coupled with uneven sidewalk surfaces, present a potential safety hazard. In view of Somerset County's recent health survey, which revealed that obesity is a major health problem, promotion of healthy lifestyle behaviors is an expected activity for all local boards of health. There was spirited discussion over balancing the need to promote healthy behaviors and the need to retain the ambience of the community. Installation of high intensity lighting was not seen as desirable. It was noted that previous descriptions of the proposed usage of Van Horne Park had indicated that the park would NOT be available for use after dusk. A recommendation was made that the Board investigate potential use of the park in the evening and early morning hours for jogging, especially since the park already has jogging paths. Expanding access to the park could accommodate the need to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors without changing the character of the community.
- **Rabies:** the Borough has a mutual aid agreement with Montgomery Township; their Animal Control Officer is available to residents of Rocky Hill. Mr. Papenberg said that one should assume that there is rabies in the fox, skunk, cat and raccoon populations and that if a person is bitten by one of these animals and the animal cannot be caught and quarantined, the person should be automatically treated for rabies.

There was discussion of a case of rabies that occurred in Salem County in which the vector was a 5-month-old puppy. Dogs are NOT required to be licensed until they are 1 year of age. The Board recommended educating and encouraging residents to vaccinate their puppies early. Dr. Fisher indicated that puppies may be vaccinated at 12 weeks of age.

President Haines spoke about the need to update the Dog Licensing Ordinance:

- to increase the licensing fee to cover the cost (\$822 installation and \$350 annual maintenance) of new licensing software that is being installed in the Borough's administrative offices by FRA Technology. The current \$5 fee generates approximately \$300/year, of which \$1.20/dog reverts to the State. The monies that remain with the Borough are totally inadequate to cover the cost of the annual rabies clinic, professional time needed to generate the licenses, purchase and distribution of tags, generation of reports... It was noted that Hopewell charges \$15/dog/year and \$10/cat/year.

- incorporate licensing of cats in a revised ordinance.

Community Pet Survey: Mr. Papenberg will check with Montgomery to determine how they conduct their survey.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 4:30 pm in the Borough Hall. All Board members are asked to review the Pandemic Flu document distributed at today's meeting by Mr. Papenberg and be prepared to discuss it and make recommendations at the next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn: made by Dr. Poelstra, seconded by Dr. Fisher. Unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Germain, Ed.D., APRN-BC, FNAP